

Misc

**Decision Notice For Proposed  
Widow Coulee FAS boat ramp**  
Region Four  
4600 Giant Springs Road  
Great Falls, MT 59405

April 1, 2002

**Description of Proposed Action:**

Install a boat ramp off of the previously built parking lot at Widow Coulee Fishing Access Site.

Recreational river access development was proposed on this property as mitigation associated with the FERC Project 2188 relicensing process for PPL Montana Missouri/Madison Hydropower Projects. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks desires to cooperate and assist in providing river access opportunities to the Missouri River in service to the fishing and floating public.

The subject property was identified as a mitigation site by citizen advisory and agency technical committees made up of local recreationists, and representatives from Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Cascade and Chouteau counties. Improvements proposed at the site included a graveled parking lot, a sealed-vault latrine and a boat ramp. The developed part of the access site is fenced to control vehicular and cattle use. Cultural resource sites on PPL Montana property, but not on the river access site, are fenced. The parking lot was completed by the fall 2000 by PPL Montana; the remainder of the improvements, except the boat ramp, were completed in the fall of 2001.

**Finding of No Significant Impact:**

The public comment period was January 31st through March 29, 2002 and advertised in the River Press, Independent Record, and Great Falls Tribune. Eleven public comments were received with only one negative comment. The negative comment received referred to preserving "non-motorized wild & scenic values" in this reach of the Missouri River. I appreciate these kinds of values, yet find that these recreation qualities are already well represented in the 147 mile federally designated Upper Missouri Wild & Scenic River managed by BLM. This boat ramp also represents a compromise mitigation effort by a spectrum user groups from the FERC Licensing Technical and Recreation Advisory Committees.

I have reviewed the EA and applicable laws, regulations, and policies and have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

**Decision:**

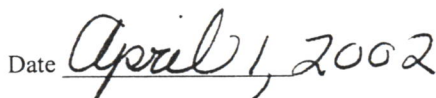
Based on the analysis in the EA, I find the project as proposed to be the preferred alternative. This alternative will enhance Widow Coulee Fishing Access Site by improving public opportunity by installing a boat ramp.

The environmental assessment may be viewed, or obtained from The Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks, Region 4, Great Falls, MT. If you have questions regarding this decision notice, or the final EA please direct requests and questions to: Mike Aderhold, 4600 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405 (406) 454-5840.

Signed

  
Mike Aderhold - Region Four Supervisor

Date



Cascade